



TELECONFERENCE ETIQUETTE

Tip of the Month, January 2017

With Junior Officers spread across the country, it is often necessary to perform work via teleconference. Efficiency of the teleconference is determined by everyone on the call.

Plan Ahead

Prepare for the call by reviewing the agenda and any other meeting documents prior to the meeting and come prepared to discuss with any questions.

Assign roles and duties associated with the call. A moderator emails the agenda out in advance, directs the conversation, and keeps the meeting on track. A secretary should take attendance and notes.

Keep track of conference call dates and times. Calendar invites can be built to include reminder messages on the day before and the day of the call.

Be on time. Being late can disrupt the call before it starts. If you must arrive late, do not immediately cut into the conversation to introduce yourself. Wait for a pause, and then speak.

Avoid Distractions

Even if you are calling in from a quiet location, be sure to use the mute button when you are not speaking.

Select a phone with a wired handset, if possible. Cellular and cordless phones often add annoying static to the call, and speakerphones tend to pick up a lot of background noise.

Pay Attention!

Using the call to catch up on work and respond to emails will turn your attention away from the call.

When on hold, your phone may play beeps or music which will greatly disturb the call. If you must step away, put the phone on mute and set the handset down instead.

Be Professional

Teleconferences are meetings and you are still trying to move a project forward or accomplish a goal. Do not start out looking at it as a waste of time.

Always identify yourself when speaking. Participants may not recognize your voice and will not be able to follow up afterwards if they have questions or comments.

Direct questions to a specific person, and not the audience at large. Addressing a specific person will help prevent confusion and ensure your question is met with an answer rather than silence.

Close the conference call with clear next steps. Include the action items, and the date and time of the next meeting (if applicable) in the meeting minutes.